Unstarred Question 1187 given in Rajya Sabha on 31st July, 2003 and state:

(a) whether Government have formulated strategy to introduce WLL technology in rural and semi-urban areas of the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) Government has adopted technology neutral policy. There is no restriction on any of Basic Service Operators/ Unified Access Services Operators to provide connections with the specific technology. However, WLL technology leads to faster roll-out of network including in rural and semi-urban areas of the country.

Telephone exchanges in Uttaranchal

951. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of telephone exchanges operating in Uttaranchal at present, district-wise; and

(b) the number of new telephone exchanges likely to be set up during the current financial year in the State, district-wise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The number of telephone exchanges operating in Uttaranchal is 431 at present, district-wise, details thereof are given in the Statement (*See* below).

(b) The number of new telephone exchanges likely to be set up during the current financial year in the State is 22 district-wise details thereof are given in the Statement-II.

Statement-I

No. of telephone exchanges operating in Uttaranchal

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of Telephone Exchanges
1.	New Tehri	45
2.	Uttarkashi	23
3.	Nainital	37
4.	Udham Singh Nagar	37
5.	Hardwar	28
6.	Chamoli	32
7.	Pauri	50
8.	Rudraprayag	20
9.	Almora	46
10.	Bageshwar	9
11.	Champawat	13
12.	Pithoragarh	32
13.	Dehradun	59
	TOTAL :	431

Statement-II

New telephone exchanges likely to be set up in Uttaranchal during the current Financial Year

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of Telephone Exchanges
1.	New Tehri	3
2.	Uttarkashi	1
3.	Nainital	1
4.	Udham Singh Nagar	-
5.	Hardwar	2
6.	Chamoli	-
7.	Pauri	5
8.	Rudraprayag	1

Sl. No.	Name of District	No. of Telephone Exchanges
9.	Almora	2
10.	Bageshwar	-
11.	Champawat	2
12.	Pithoragarh	2
13.	Dehradun	3
	TOTAL :	22

Call rates of Reliance WLL mobile services

†952. DR. PRABHA THAKUR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether call rates of WLL mobile services of Reliance are quite low *vis-a-vis* call rates of other cellular phones; and

(b) the details in terms of percentage to the extent these charges are less?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) It is extremely difficult to compare the call rate of WLL mobile services with that of cellular mobile services because of the large number of tariff packages offered by cellular operators. Moreover, there is no uniform rate of call charges either in WLL (M) or cellular service across all the different packages. The call charges also vary from circle to circle and from operator to operator. Depending upon his usage pattern, the subscriber chooses from among the alternative packages offered by the operators.

Village Public Telephones

953. DR. DASARI NARAYANA RAO: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.